

TEXAS 4-H LIVESTOCK AMBASSADORS

The Texas 4-H Livestock Ambassador program strives to provide high school aged 4-H members the opportunity to develop and practice advanced leadership skills related to mentoring other youth, and to become advocates for animal agriculture.

Leadership

Students completing the requirements to become a Texas 4-H Livestock Ambassador become accountable to his/her County Extension Agent, their community and the program. Ambassadors must contribute 40 hours of service in presenting topics in agricultural advocacy, nutrition, selection, daily maintenance and care, showmanship, sportsmanship, preparing new 4-H families for show, and management of show animals during a livestock show. Additionally, the ambassadors teach livestock ethics and animal care to the novice 4-H families. An online reporting system allows the program to capture the educational efforts of the unique leaders. The results have been incredible.

Knowledge

Selected students are exposed to rigorous college level animal science. The “Short Courses” on the campuses of Texas Tech University and Texas A&M University are the settings where the educational experiences occur. Professors and Extension Specialists lead the students through the advanced curriculum. The professors provide questions contributing to the 200 question final exam the students must pass with an 80%. Purposeful construction of the curriculum; fused with a commitment to hands on learning have generated exceptional knowledge gained outcomes. Since 2010, 150 students have completed the exam, 149 have passed.

Career Development

The program exposes youth to a diverse array of career opportunities in degree programs from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at Texas Tech University. Testimonials were given regarding the power of a degree in agricultural education with respect to job interviews, placement and competition. Students make valuable contacts with people that offer assistance in career development. Industry representatives provide contact information to students and as Ambassadors they were granted unique access to leaders in Texas Agriculture through program activities. Below are outcomes regarding career development:

- In 2010, in a research study, students were tested on his/her livestock production knowledge before and after the short course. The exam was 100 questions, multiple choice and short answer. The average before was 49% and elevated to an outstanding 75% at the conclusion of the course. Further investigating knowledge gained students received a livestock production expertise instrument administered pre and post course.
- 93% of Livestock Ambassadors enroll in the college of agriculture
- 87% are interested in a career in agriculture
- “My experiences in the program will benefit me in agriculture or any other career”
- “This program changed my career path...I love agriculture more”
- The program plans on following the students through college as they enter the workforce.



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